

- (II) Up-grading the GOITO at Guahati to the level of Regional Director for better co-ordination for the North Eastern States.
- (III) Inviting foreign media and Travel Agents/Tour Operators on fam trips to the North East.
- (IV) *Additional Central Financial Assistance for use of Information Technology in the field of tourism.*

(b) Information on profits from tourism are not available as the profits accrue to private sector enterprises.

(c) Central Financial Assistance is provided to the State Tourism in North East and other States for tourism infrastructure, for human resource development and promotion through fairs and festivals.

Prevention of Erosion in Diara Region, Bihar

†298. SHRI VIJAY SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government intend to take permanent measures for preventing the erosion taking place every year at Diara region of the Ganga in the State of Bihar;

(b) if so, the kind of safety measure proposed to be taken for prevention of erosion in Diara region; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Water Conservation Programme of Andhra Pradesh

299. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister in a recent visit to Andhra Pradesh was highly appreciative of the water conservation programme in the State of Andhra Pradesh;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) whether it is a fact that he was very much impressed by the overwhelming response from the people to the programme and is keen in spreading the same to other parts of the country;

(c) if so, what are the details of the programme; and

(d) whether these programmes would be taken to the drought prone areas of the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) and (b) As per the report of the State Government, the Prime Minister appreciated the water conservation programme in the State of Andhra Pradesh.

(c) and (d) As per the information furnished by the State Government of Andhra Pradesh, the main objective of the water conservation programme is to retard the flow of rain water to increase the ground water potentiality and increase the storage capacity of surface water. The programme includes recharging of wells, construction of diversion channels, and revitalization of defunct wells. The programme envisages creating awareness for sustainable utilization of water resources and taking up water conservation measures.

Water being a State subject, action to augment ground water resources is to be taken by the concerned State Governments. However, the Central Ground Water Board is implementing a Central Sector Scheme on "Studies on Artificial Recharge of Ground Water" on pilot basis with a view to assess the efficacy of various recharge structures in some 'Over exploited' and 'Dark' blocks of the country. The Government has earmarked an amount of Rs. 25.00 crore during the IX Five Year Plan for the scheme. The Scheme covers the States of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and NCT of Delhi.

Some of the other water conservation programmes undertaken by the Government in the country are:—

- (1) National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPA)
- (2) Soil Conservation in the Catchment of River Valley Project.
- (3) Integrated Watershed Management in the Catchment of Flood Prone Rivers (FPR)
- (4) Watershed Development Project for control of shifting Cultivation Area (WDPSCA) in North-Eastern India.

- (5) Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP)
- (6) Desert Development Programme (DDP)
- (7) Integrated Wasteland Development Project (IWDP)

Completion of Telugu Ganga Project

300. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is a huge cost escalation in Telugu Ganga Project;
- (b) the details of its initial estimate in 1983 and the present estimated cost; and
- (c) by when the project is likely to be completed to solve drinking water problems of Chennai besides problems of Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BUJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) to (c) The Government of Andhra Pradesh has not intimated the present estimated cost of Telugu Ganga Project. However the estimated cost of the Project was Rs. 2470.00 crore (as per the review report of September 1997) against the initial estimated cost of Rs. 637.00 crore in 1983 as reported by Andhra Pradesh. The Project is likely to be completed beyond IX Plan.

Linking of Major Rivers

301. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state the action taken to link major rivers as recommended by the K. L. Rao Committee to solve the problem of certain areas facing problem of floods while other areas registering perpetual drought?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BUJOYA CHAKAVARTY): There is no Committee under the name of K. L. Rao Committee. However, Dr. K.L. Rao proposed Ganga Cauvery Link which was examined by the Central Water Commission and found to be grossly under estimated. Besides the proposal also required a large block of power and was devoid of any flood control benefits. However, the Ministry of Irrigation (now Ministry of Water Resources) and Central Water Commission have formulated a National Perspective Plan for Water Resources Development